

Anabaptist Beginnings (1523–1533): a Source Book. Edited by William R. Estep, Jr. (Bibliotheca Humanistica & Reformatorica, xvi). Pp. viii + 172. Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1976. Hfl. 75.

At a time when, due to the inability of many students to handle the originals, we are seeing the proliferation of source translations, one cannot but regret the appearance of the volume under review. Several of the twenty-odd documents—preponderantly from Hübmaier and Zurich circles—are reprinted from earlier collections; but most appear here for the first time in English translation. This, and the current interest in dissent, should unfortunately guarantee a large, uncritical readership for what is on the whole a shoddy piece of work.

The brief introductions and virtually non-existent annotation provide an insufficient basis for judgement of the author's knowledge of the field. But as a translator, he is well beyond his depth. Apart from periodic difficulties in handling the English language, he seems to subscribe to the long-discredited theory that it is satisfactory translation to furnish dictionary equivalents strung together, with little regard for sense, in the word order of the original. More serious still, a series of comparisons with the originals reveals him to be woefully wanting in the competences necessary to handle sixteenth-century Swiss-German. Everywhere one finds careless paraphrase as an escape from textual difficulties. On occasion the sense of his author has been missed altogether.

Let one example from many possible ones suffice. On the third day of the 2nd Zurich Disputation, Ludwig Haetzer records Hübmaier's conclusion to a statement on the Mass: 'und [will] mich üch nach dem wort gottes williglich und in aller ghorsame underwerfen, ouch üch als den nachfolgern Christi trüwlich nachfolgen . . .' (*Zwingli's Werke*, ed. Schuler & Schulthess, Zurich 1828–1842, i. 531). Estep fails to observe the allusion to I Cor. iv. 16, and renders: 'for I will follow God's Word willingly and in all obedience come under its judgement for you and all of us to be truly Christ's disciples and follow after him . . .' (19).

This is a volume that ought never to have appeared within a scholarly series. At least for those portions of it that are new, it will prove a most pernicious guide to the thought of early Anabaptists, and university teachers will do well to warn their students away from it.

INSTITUT D'HISTOIRE DE LA
RÉFORMATION, GENEVA

R. GERALD HOBBS

The Godly Man in Stuart England: Anglicans, Puritans and the Two Tables, 1620–1670. By J. Sears McGee. (Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany, 110). Pp. xx + 300. New Haven-London: Yale University Press, 1976. \$17.50.

British historians who work on the religious history of Elizabethan and early Stuart England are increasingly coming to the conclusion that the term 'Anglican' is best avoided, as positively misleading, and that the term 'Puritan' must be used with due care and attention to its changing definition over time. But across the Atlantic matters are apparently different, for there books continue to be written dedicated to the proposition that one can distinguish 'Anglican' and 'Puritan' ideal types in the century which runs approximately from the accession of Elizabeth to the Restoration. Professor McGee's study is the latest in this trans-Atlantic tradition, concentrating on the years 1620 to 1670. He writes that he has 'subsume[d] within puritan ranks those who protested against the rise of what they called "Arminianism" in the Church of England beginning in the